

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 17-32 are pending. In the previous office action, claims 1-15 and 17-32 including independent claims 1, 14, 15, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Albrecht.

In the previous Office Action response, the Applicants' Representative argued that Albrecht does not teach or suggest "disabling user logic provided for implementation of the configuration data after it is loaded onto the configurable device." The Applicants' Representative also argued that Albrecht does not even teach "user logic" and a "configurable device." The Examiner argued that Albrecht in column 4, lines 25-30 teaches these recitations.

Albrecht states "Flash security circuit 226 protects FLASH memory 224 from unauthorized write accesses, by keeping FLASH memory 224 write disabled, and generating an SMI to invoke the secured system BIOS write data authentication functions in system management memory 222 to authenticate the write data, whenever it enables FLASH memory 224 for a write access." (column 4, lines 25-30)

It is acknowledged that Albrecht does have a FLASH memory that is protected from write access. However, data written to FLASH memory is not user logic. User logic theoretically could be written to a FLASH memory. However, this is not taught or suggested in Albrecht and can not be assumed. Furthermore, even if "user logic" is broadly interpreted to include data written to FLASH memory, the FLASH memory is not disabled after data is written to FLASH. Write protection is not disabling a device from operating. The FLASH memory is not disabled because it can continue to operate and provide data to other devices. It remains enabled for substantially the primary purposes of FLASH memory, which is to provide a read only memory mechanism. One of skill in the art would understand that the FLASH memory remains enabled.

Nonetheless, to facilitate prosecution, the independent claims have been amended to recite "wherein the user logic includes functions associated with a user design for implementation on the configurable device." According to particular embodiments, the user design is a Verilog or VHDL design for implementation on an FPGA. One of skill in the art will understand that data written to FLASH is not user logic including functions associated with a

user design for implementation on the FLASH. It is again theoretically possible that a FLASH memory could store functions associated with a design. However, this is not taught or suggested and even if it is assumed, a FLASH memory storing functions associated with a design is still not a configurable device with user logic having functions associated with a user design for implementation on the configurable device.

Furthermore, independent claims 1 and 15 have been amended to recite “wherein an error bit is set by a disabling signal generator to disable user logic.” Albrecht does not teach or suggest setting an error bit by using a disabling signal generator to disable user logic. Albrecht only states that “flash security circuit 226 protects FLASH memory 224 from unauthorized write accesses, by keeping FLASH memory 224 write disabled.” A flash security circuit protecting a FLASH memory 224 from unauthorized write accesses is not a disabling signal generator writing an error bit to disable user logic. Again it is theoretically conceivable that a FLASH memory 224 could be write disabled by writing an error bit to the FLASH memory. However, this is not the mechanism taught or suggested and it can not be assumed that Albrecht operates in this way as there are numerous ways of write protecting a FLASH memory. Since Albrecht does not specify how the FLASH memory is write protected, it is believed that Albrecht uses a conventional mechanism which involves intercepting write accesses using the flash security circuit. This is not a signal generator writing an error bit.

In light of the above remarks, the rejections to the independent claims are believed overcome for at least the reasons noted above. Applicants’ Representative believes that all pending claims are allowable in their present form. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns for Applicants’ Representative, the Examiner is encouraged to contact her at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,
BEYER WEAVER LLP

/ G. Audrey Kwan/
Godfrey Audrey Kwan
Reg. No. 46,850

Beyer Weaver, LLP
P.O. Box 70250
Oakland, CA 94612-0250
(510) 663-1100